

Firefighter of the Year Award Ceremony
December 16, 2003
Award Recipients

COMMUNITY SERVICE
Hanson Fire Department

Lieutenant Jerome Thompson	Firefighter Robert O'Brien
Firefighter John Rothwell	Firefighter James Van Bibber

Lieutenant Thompson, the Hanson Public Education Officer, is the regional coordinator for the Fire Safety House and conducts training for other departments in its use. He works with his team — Firefighters O'Brien, Rothwell and Van Bibber — to offer CPR and first-aid training and to present fire safety programs to youngsters in day care centers and pre-school, right on up through high school. They also visit local day camps and senior centers. The team coordinates an annual Public Safety Day that teaches fire, home and bicycle safety. These men devote countless unpaid hours promoting fire and life safety.

GOVERNOR'S CITATIONS
Boston Fire Department

Firefighter Aundria D. Burcy	Firefighter Cornell Horton
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On February 12, 2002, Firefighters Burcy and Horton were off duty, in separate cars, when they happened by a building with heavy fire showing. They each stopped and entered the rear of the building to alert the occupants, even though they had no safety equipment. It was fortunate for two children inside that these firefighters stopped and braved the flames, for Firefighter Burcy was able to rescue the children.

Boston Fire Department:

Firefighter Christopher Corwin	Firefighter Michael S. Dannaher
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On December 18, 2002, firefighters responded to a call and found a 14-year-old boy struggling in water seven feet below a sea wall. Firefighter Corwin, seeing there was no time to spare, jumped into the water without donning a survival suit. Firefighter Dannaher followed him into the water as soon as he arrived, and the two men held the victim afloat until fellow rescue workers could pull him to safety. All three were transported to the hospital.

Fitchburg Fire Department**Firefighter James Marabello**

On August 18, 2002, firefighters responded to a call for a building fire with people trapped. Upon arrival, an individual with smoke inhalation and burns reported that another person was trapped in the basement of the wood-frame house and that the fire was fueled by gasoline. Firefighter Marabello, equipped with self-contained breathing apparatus and a thermal imaging camera, descended to the basement, found the victim and pulled him out to the backyard.

Hyannis Fire Department**Lieutenant Thomas Kenney****Firefighter Kevin Black****Firefighter Scott Hanson**

On January 4, 2003, Lieutenant Kenney and Firefighters Black and Hanson reported to a two-alarm structure fire, where they were charged with forcing their way into a heavily secured candle-manufacturing facility that had been abandoned for 10 years. Doors were locked, padlocked on the inside, and welded shut.

An indigent man who had entered through a hidden hole in the wall was reported trapped inside the building, and Lieutenant Kenney and Firefighters Hanson and Black cut open a door to create access for search-and-rescue and attack crews. As heavy snow fell and smoke conditions intensified, the men cut open additional doors in the structure to provide additional egress and access for the crews. Firefighter Black was injured from a fall, but kept on working so that the victim could be removed from an exit closer to his location.

Leominster Fire Department**Lieutenant Charles LeBlanc****Firefighter Robert Gaudet**

On April 4, 2003, a small aircraft with seven people on board crashed into an industrial building, and firefighters found heavy fire conditions in both plane and building. Lt. LeBlanc and Firefighter Gaudet stretched a hand line and entered the plane, along with State Trooper Charles McGrail, to attempt rescue. Using the hand line to keep the flames away from the occupants, the three worked to effect a rescue despite large amounts of fuel within and around the aircraft. A teen-age girl survived the crash.

Scituate Fire Department**Firefighter John Reidy**

On October 27, 2002, firefighters responded to Minot Beach, where police were attempting to throw a life ring to a victim in distress about 100 yards offshore. High winds and distance thwarted their efforts, and heavy surf made launching a rescue boat impossible. Firefighter Reidy suited up and, after tethering himself to shore personnel, swam out to the rapidly tiring victim, who was clinging to buoy. He secured the victim to a lifeline and swam with her back to safety.

GROUP AWARDS FOR MERITORIOUS CONDUCT**Boston Fire Department**

Lieutenant Robert J. Connolly
Firefighter Stephen Irving

Firefighter Brian Cobb

On March 10, 2003, firefighters responded to a building fire. Due to severe heat, heavy smoke and zero visibility on the second floor, Lieutenant Connolly and Firefighters Cobb and Irving made a search on their hands and knees. While sweeping the floor in front of him, Firefighter Irving discovered an unconscious female wedged in a doorway. With the assistance of Lieutenant Connolly and Firefighter Cobb, the victim was removed to the safety of the street and transported for treatment.

Chelsea Fire Department

From Ladder 1, Group 4

Captain William Cross

Firefighter John Cunningham

Firefighter Omar Frometta

From Engine 2, Group 4

Lieutenant James Birmingham

Firefighter Gabriel Ruiz

Firefighter Mark Lee

On April 25, 2002, firefighters responded to find a victim 40 feet offshore in the Mystic River. Under Captain Cross's direction, Lieutenant Birmingham immediately entered the 38-degree water to assess the victim's condition, without protective gear. Meanwhile, Firefighter Frometta donned a survival suit and entered the water to secure the victim, who was in cardiac arrest. Firefighters Cunningham, Ruiz and Lee, with Captain Cross, helped Firefighter Frometta retrieve the victim, and perform CPR to restore her heart rate.

Lowell Fire Department

Captain Donald McCarthy
Lieutenant Stephen McCabe

Firefighter Joshua Luna
Firefighter Michael Silva

On October 27, 2002, firefighters reported to a building fire that was spreading up into second-floor windows as the second alarm was struck. Lieutenant McCabe and Captain McCarthy were raising a ground ladder to a flat roof on the second floor, when several occupants who had fled to the roof jumped onto the ladder as it was being raised.

Lieutenant McCabe and Firefighters Luna and Silva quickly stabilized the situation, taking decisive action to prevent the five panicked victims from leaping to the ground.

Mansfield Fire Department

Lieutenant Richard Fiske
Lieutenant James Puleo
Firefighter John Brunelli
Firefighter William Burgess
Firefighter P. Todd DeCosta

Firefighter Kevin Fontes
Firefighter Neal Herrick
Firefighter Keith Hodson
Firefighter John Robbins
Firefighter Don Tebeau

On February 2, 2003, firefighters responded to a building fire. After advancing attack lines, they entered in search of two occupants. One person was discovered quickly and pulled from the building by Lieutenant Fiske. Lt. Puleo continued the search, halting when he discovered flames directly over the heads of two members of the attack line crew. Firefighter Burgess then called out to say he had found the second occupant. Firefighter Brunelli stood fast with the hose line while Firefighter Burgess and Lieutenant Puleo removed the victim.

Firefighters DeCosta, Fontes, Herrick, Hodson, Robbins and Tebeau provided essential support for search and rescue and patient care during this incident.

Fire District 14 Technical Rescue Team

Ashland Fire Department
Hopkinton Fire Department

Milford Fire Department
Southborough Fire Department

On July 24, 2002, a multifamily home in Hopkinton exploded and collapsed, trapping two small children, while five other people escaped. Upon responding, the Technical Rescue Team found a pile of debris and an active natural gas leak, yet entered the extremely dangerous site to search for the girls. The building was extremely unstable, but these skilled men persisted until they located both victims.

MEDAL OF VALOR**Boston Fire Department**

Lieutenant Paul D. Lucas
Firefighter Vincent E. Dimino

Firefighter Dorian Jenkins

On May 3, 2003, firefighters responded to a fire involving all floors of a three-story building, where occupants were at the windows. Fire also was extending to a second dwelling. Fog steam was used to protect the occupants from the heat of the fire, but Lieutenant Lucas realized that a ground ladder could not be thrown in time. He entered the rear of the building, made his way to the third floor under deteriorating conditions and had begun a search when he heard cries for help. The lieutenant located a woman and two children and was able to hold onto all three of them, bringing them through heavy smoke down a rear stairway to the safety of the street.

Meanwhile, Firefighter Dimino was alerted that there was a man trapped on the first floor. He entered the building through the rear and made his way through heavy smoke and intense heat to the front of the building, where he found an unconscious male on the floor. He carried him to the rear stairs and out to safety.

Firefighter Jenkins went to the second floor, where he found an unconscious victim. He carried her to safety and began CPR when he saw she was not breathing.

Brewster Fire Department

Captain Michael Battles

Captain Arthur Romme

On February 19, 2003, firefighters responded to a house fire, where an agitated male told Captains Romme and Battles that his mother was upstairs in the building. Wearing full protective clothing, the two captains made their way upstairs. Fire and heat in the first floor sent heavy smoke up the stairs with them. With no visibility upstairs, they located a partially closed door, which was blocked by the victim. They managed to extricate the woman, who had at one time been a call Rescue Department member. They brought her outside, while an attack line was used to hold the fire back.

Hyannis Fire Department

Captain Eric Kristofferson
Firefighter Thomas Corbett

Firefighter Andrew Kleamenakis

Inside the abandoned candle factory on January 4, 2003, thick smoke filled a large search area divided into many compartments, strewn with debris and with open holes in the floors. Captain Kristofferson and Firefighters Corbett and Kleamenakis entered the building through one of the forced doors. Using a thermal imaging device, they began their search as propane cylinders brought into the building by transients began to explode.

They located the victim about 200 feet into the building and dragged him about 75 feet to a door, arriving just as the outside crew forced open this door. The victim was brought outside to a waiting ambulance crew.

Ipswich Fire Department

Firefighter Lee Prentiss

On Nov. 10, 2002, Firefighter Prentiss was among those responding to a building fire, where heavy black smoke was issuing from a second-floor window. Residents reported that occupants remained in that apartment.

Firefighter Prentiss made his way to the apartment and located a semi-conscious victim, who then collapsed. Firefighter Prentiss dragged the victim to the door, where the lieutenant took the victim. Firefighter Prentiss turned back into the apartment, crawling down a hallway until he found the second victim unconscious. He dragged this victim to the door, where other rescuers could take over, then once again returned, using a thermal imaging camera to ensure that there were no other victims in the apartment. Firefighter Prentiss then helped advance a line to extinguish the fire.

Lowell Fire Department

Lieutenant George Rose
Firefighter Paul Cassella

Firefighter John Dubey
Firefighter Kelly Page

On October 27, 2002, terrified fire victims leaped onto a ladder as it was being raised to the second-floor roof of an apartment building. During that fire, Lt. Rose learned that two second-floor occupants were unaccounted for. He and Firefighter Page braved severe fire conditions to find an adult male lying on the floor unconscious. They carried him out for medical assistance. Meanwhile, Firefighters Cassella and Dubey entered the apartment and found an unconscious female victim. Conditions were close to flashover as these firefighters carried the woman to safety.

Norton Fire Department

Firefighter Robert Salvo

In less than a month's time in the summer of 2002, Firefighter Salvo saved two youngsters from drowning. On July 7, while off-duty, he had set out on Lake Winnepesaukee in a boat with family and friends. Soon he saw a man in the water crying that he could not find his son. Firefighter Salvo dove in to search the darkened water. Another boater brought the boy to the surface, and Firefighter Salvo, who is an EMT, performed CPR on the 13-year-old. On August 4, Firefighter Salvo was at a backyard barbecue when someone noticed that a 3-year-old boy had fallen into a

swimming pool and was floating beneath the surface. The man jumped in, grabbed the boy and handed him to the firefighter. Firefighter Salvo commenced CPR, and the boy quickly responded.

FIRE MARSHAL'S AWARD

Thomas Galligan, III, President of Papa Gino's, Inc.

For ten years, under Tom Galligan's leadership, Papa Gino's Inc. has hosted fire station open houses during October, in conjunction with the National Fire Protection Association's Fire Prevention Week. Papa Gino's is partnering with fire departments throughout the six New England states to promote fire safety. This Massachusetts' company also provides educational material in its restaurants and for schools. Papa Gino's offers pizza and fire hats at fire prevention open houses at more than 130 fire stations. Those pizzas have really added up over the past decade. In sponsoring more than 1,000 open houses, Papa Gino's has donated more than 60,000 large pizzas to the cause of fire safety. It also has distributed more than one million activity sheets and educational flyers. By working hard to attract the public to sources of fire safety information, Tom Galligan and Papa Gino's can literally save lives.

Lt./EMT Michael Aries, Natick Fire Department

Lt. Michael Aries is leading a successful effort to bring early intervention to victims of sudden cardiac arrest. In 1998 he was appointed chairman of the Public Information, Education, Resource Committee for the state Emergency Medical Advisory Board and accepted a challenge to develop a program to reinforce the chain of survival for cardiac arrest.

He developed a tool to assess a community's resources for handling sudden cardiac arrest situations, known as "Heart Safe Community," which encourages CPR classes, early access to emergency care, and early defibrillation through traditional first responders or public access defibrillators. Massachusetts now boasts 55 Heart Safe Communities, and the Cape and Islands have been declared "Heart Safe Cape Cod." Logan Airport is expected to become "Heart Safe Massport," and efforts are under way to expand the program to colleges and universities. Lt. Aries has long advocated for early CPR and early defibrillation, and the communities that have followed his lead will certainly save lives.